

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation

AFTER SCHOOL PARENT HANDBOOK

SPRING 2025 Pilot Program



AFTER SCHOOL PROGRAM

www.pittsylvaniacountyva.gov

434-432-7736

**Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation Department
After School Parent Handbook**

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Welcome to Our After School Program!

Dear Families,

We are very happy and excited to have your children enrolled in our After School Program! This is an especially exciting time, as you are part of our first pilot program. We are hopeful it will be a success, thanks to your participation, and that it will pave the way for future programs at other schools. As one of the first families to join, you are helping us get started, and we truly appreciate your trust in us.

Our goal is to create a safe, engaging, and nurturing environment where your child can grow, explore their interests, make new friends, and enjoy a wide range of activities. This Family Handbook is designed to guide you through our program's policies and procedures, ensuring a smooth and enjoyable experience for everyone.

Our staff is committed to providing a fun, safe, and secure environment for your children. We offer a variety of activities, including homework time, tutoring, arts and crafts, special events, and games for all ages. Creating a safe atmosphere where your children can have fun, learn, and make new friends is our number one goal.

We value your feedback and input, as it will help shape and improve the program, not just for your child, but for future students as well.

Thank you again for enrolling your child in our After School Program. We are looking forward to a fantastic school year filled with new friends and lasting memories. Please don't hesitate to reach out if I can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,



Kelsie Myers | Program Coordinator

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation Department

(434) 432-7736 | www.pittsylvaniacountyva.gov

Contact and Sites

Parks and Recreation Main Office

Chatham Community Center (434) 432-7736
Office Hours 8:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Kelsie Myers (434) 432-7736
Program Coordinator
Kelsie.myers@pittgov.org

Justin Price (434) 432-7736
Director
Justin.price@pittgov.org

If you need to contact the After School Program staff or if you are returning their call, please contact our main office at (434) 432-7736. Please do not contact the school directly via their front office phone.

Program Location

Kentuck Elementary – Kindergarten through 5th grade
100 Kentuck Elementary Circle Ringgold, VA 24586

Hours of Operation

After School Programs operate from the time participants are released from school until 6:00 p.m., Monday – Friday.

Tentative Daily Schedule

3:00 – 3:30 Students are checked in. Snacks, bathroom break, and announcements.
3:30 – 4:30 Homework/Academics. Tutoring will be provided during this time, if needed.
4:30 – 5:30 Group activities and restroom/water break.
5:30 – 6:00 Clean materials/free-time until pick-up.

Tentative Program dates: January 6 – May 21, 2025



PROGRAM PARTICIPATION GUIDELINES

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation welcomes individuals of all abilities, and we have adopted the following participation guidelines to assist people participating in our programs and services.

- Age requirements are established to suitably design activities appropriate for participants in any given program.
- Individuals must be able to communicate in English their basic needs and receive basic instructions to help maintain a safe environment.
- To participate in any program or activity, individuals must meet the skill level that is required.
- Individuals must be able to dress themselves with minimal assistance from staff (i.e., with buttons, zippers, and snaps).
- If the program or activity includes a snack and/or mealtime, the participant must demonstrate the ability to feed or drink by themselves with minimal verbal assistance from staff (i.e., verbal cues and reminders).
- The significant social component of our programs, services and activities warrants the necessity of individuals being able to care for their own hygiene needs and conditions to participate.
- Individuals must be able to use restroom facilities with minimal assistance from staff (i.e. verbal cues and reminders) and independently get on and off the toilet.
- Individuals must be willing to work toward the goals presented for that program or activity.

Mission Statement

The Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation Department, through a coordinated effort, seeks to enrich the quality of life of the citizens we serve, by providing safe and accessible recreational facilities and a diversified program of recreational activities for all citizens.

After School Goals

The After School Program is designed to provide positive after school activities for elementary school participants within a safe, secure and enriching environment. A trained and caring group of staff supervises the program. Educational and recreational activities geared to the interest of the participants are provided and will include: a study program period, arts and crafts, sports, games, special events, music days, and group activities.

Program Objectives

- Provide an enriching experience for all participants.
- Provide a variety of quality recreational and educational activities in a safe and fun atmosphere.
- Create positive staff/participant interaction, communication and guidance.
- Promote self-confidence and accomplishment through completion of program activities.
- Provide encouragement and help expand social skills. Provide an outlet for physical exertion.

Non-Discrimination Clause

- No otherwise qualified individual with a disability in the U.S. shall, solely by reason of her or his disability, be excluded from the participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination.
- No person shall on the grounds of race, color, or national origin be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise subjected to discrimination.

Registration Process

- Parents/Guardians are expected to complete a new registration form each year for the program. Personal information is requested so that we can safely deliver programs and services and provide quality service for your child with specific attention to their needs.
- Children must be registered by the registration deadline date, pay the \$90 registration fee, and have all paperwork completed before they can attend the program.
- A child is considered registered once the registration form and all other necessary paperwork have been completed and the registration fees are paid in full.
- **A copy of the birth certificate and up-to-date immunization records is required and must be on file with registration forms before the child may attend our program.**

Fees

- Fee is \$55 per week, per child.
 - Full rate is required regardless of how many days your child attends.
- Sibling rate is \$52 per week, per child.
 - Full rate is required regardless of how many days your child attends.
- Fees are set forth by Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation and are subject to change.

Weekly Payment Due Dates:

<u>January 2025</u>	<u>February 2025</u>	<u>March 2025</u>	<u>April 2025</u>	<u>May 2025</u>
1/9/2025	2/6/2025	3/6/2025	4/10/2025	5/1/2025
1/16/2025	2/13/2025	3/13/2025	4/17/2025	5/8/2025
1/23/2025	2/20/2025	3/20/2025	4/24/2025	
1/30/2025	2/27/2025	3/27/2025		

Monthly due dates are highlighted

Payment Policy

- The registration fee is due at the time of registration for each participant. This fee will cover the first week and last week of the program (January 6 – 10, 2025 and May 19 – 21, 2025).
- Payments will be due on Thursday by 6:00 p.m. prior to the week that the child is scheduled to attend.
- The first missed payment will result in a warning, and you will have until the following Monday at 6:00 p.m. to pay the balance.
- For the second missed payment, a \$10 penalty will be added per child, with an additional \$5 for each subsequent late payment.
- Continued missed payments may lead to removal from the program after a third strike.
- If the balance on your account is not paid in full, including late fees, your child will be withdrawn from the After School Program and your account will be flagged preventing you from registering for any Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation program until account balance is paid in full.
- Payment must be made prior to attending unless you have made a payment arrangement with the Program Coordinator.

Forms of Payment

- All payments are to be made by cash, check, or money order. Checks are to be made payable to Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation.
- Payments may be made weekly or monthly as long as payment is received in advance.
- If you wish to pay monthly, please call the Parks and Recreation office or email Kelsie Myers.
- Pittsylvania County will charge \$50 for returned checks. In the event of a returned check, future payments must be made by cash or money order.

Program Openings and Closings/Inclement Weather

- This program operates according to the school schedule. If the school is closed for any reason, the program will also be closed.
- Please note that by signing the contract, you are committed to making payments for the entire semester, regardless of attendance or unforeseen closures. Refund will not be issued for missed days or for any days when the program is unable to operate.

After School Closure Dates

We will be closed on the following dates during the Spring of the 2025 pilot program school year:

January 20, 2025	Martin Luther King Jr. Day
February 17, 2025	Presidents Day
March 31 - April 4, 2025	Spring Break
April 18, 2025	Easter Monday

These dates reflect the school system calendar. The list of dates is subject to changes and modifications.

Transportation

Participants will not be transported in personal vehicles at any time unless it is an emergency.

Participant Pick-Up Procedures

- A daily attendance record is kept on all participants who attend the After School Program.
- Participants will be released from their classrooms and will be sent to the cafeteria for check-in.
- Staff will take attendance to ensure all participants are checked in upon arrival.
- After attendance, children will be put into groups based on their age/grade level. Some days, they may work together depending on the number of students or the activity planned.
- Children must be signed out of the program each day by parent or an authorized adult. Pick up each day will be by 6:00 p.m. Until staff gets to know individuals, staff will need to see picture ID of the person who is authorized to pick up the child.
- Children will only be allowed to leave with person(s) that have been designated to pick up the child.
- Parents need to list on the authorization form any adult that you will allow your child to leave the program with.
- If your child will not be attending the program or you need to arrange early pick-up, you must notify staff before the program opens at 3:00 p.m.

Late Pick-up Policy

- Parents whose children remain past the end time will be charged \$2 per participant for each minute late beginning at 6:05 p.m.
- Late fees must be paid by 6:00 p.m. the next program day.
- If a parent/guardian has not made contact with our offices by 6:00 p.m., staff will notify the parent first, and then emergency contacts will be called. As a last resort, the police and/or Social Services will be called for assistance.
- After three times of being in violation of this policy, parents may be asked to find alternative after school care.

Alternate Pick-up

- Only persons that you have previously approved will be permitted to sign for your child.
- In the event that someone else may be picking up your child, the alternate person must be listed on the Authorized Pick-up list.
- The alternate person must provide a photo ID at pick-up, preferably a valid driver's license.
- Please notify staff if someone other than the individual listed on the form will pick up your child. Staff will make a copy of this person's ID; however, permanent changes must be made in writing.
- Participants in Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation care are only permitted to be released to individuals 18 and older.
- If we are not notified prior to checkout, your child will not be allowed to leave until we have communicated with you. This procedure is imperative for the safety and security of your child.

Legal Authorization

"Parent" includes biological, foster/adoptive parents, legal wards, and in those *loco parentis*. Both parents may authorize individuals to pick up their child unless a court order restricts a parent's access. Without such a court order or termination of parental rights, both parents will have equal access to the child. Parents must provide the latest court orders regarding custody or visitation at registration. Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation does not monitor or enforce visitation orders; parents are responsible for compliance.

Cancellation of Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation Programs

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation retains the right to adjust any program details printed in this handbook including fees, locations, times, and starting dates. Fees are NOT pro-rated. Please note that the program must meet its minimum enrollment. If a program is cancelled, registrants will be contacted.

Photography and Publicity

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation retains the right to photograph or videotape programs, participants, and volunteers for publicity purposes. If you have questions about this policy, please contact the main office at (434) 432-7736.

Afternoon Snacks

- The program will have a designated time for participants to eat their snacks, which are provided through the Pittsylvania County Public Schools.
- Staff will hand out snacks to participants.
- If your child has specific dietary needs, which are not met by this program, please notify staff and provide a snack for your child.

Health Requirements

- For the protection and safety of your child and others, please do not bring/send your child if they are sick.
- Parents will be notified if their child has become ill or has a temperature of 100 degrees Fahrenheit or more and will be required to pick up their child within a reasonable amount of time.
- All minor incidents, such as scrapes and scratches, will be handled on site by the After School Program staff and will be reported to you at the end of the day.
- If deemed necessary, a parent/guardian may be contacted immediately. Rescue squad will be called if a serious injury is suspected. Pittsylvania County does not provide medical insurance for participants.
- Staff will maintain a written record of the child's serious and significant injuries and it will include the child's name, date and time of injury, type and circumstance of injury, staff present, treatment, when parents were notified, if transported and where the child was taken, and future action to prevent recurrence of the injury.
- Please notify staff if a child has a contagious disease/condition such as ringworm, headlice, pink eye, chicken pox, etc. in such cases; a doctor's note will be required for your child to return to the program.
- **Parents are required to notify the Program Coordinator or Director, immediately, if their child has been diagnosed with a communicable disease. An email will be sent to all parents to inform of the communicable disease. Names of participants will not be released.**

Medication Policy

If a child is to receive any medication (including over-the-counter), the Program Coordinator must have the following information:

- The Parent/Guardian is required to hand deliver the medication(s) to the Program Coordinator at Chatham Community Center, or to the on-site Supervisor at the school. Please do not have it delivered by your child.
- **If your child has medication stored in the nurse's office at school, we are not authorized access to the medication.**
- Medication must be in its original container as delivered by the pharmacy.
- A complete written and signed Authorization to Administer Prescribed and Non-Prescribed Medication Form from the parent/guardian.
- No child is allowed possession of any medication while participating in the program unless it has been approved by the Program Coordinator, i.e. carrying an epi-pen or inhaler.
- All medications prescribed and/or over-the-counter, will be kept and locked in a secure location at the schools by the on-site Supervisor.
- **All routine medications must be administered by the school nurse prior to the end of the school day, before the child joins our program.**

Emergencies

- Our emergency operations plan details actions to be taken in events that include evacuation, internal lockdown, external lockdown or shelter-in place.
- Program staff are trained in emergency operations at hire and annually. Program staff will complete fire drills and shelter-in-place drills.
- Parents are requested to keep their child's emergency contact information up to date.
- During certain crisis emergency situations, County Emergency Officials may require the program to close and children to be either sent home or evacuated to a safe location. Staff will contact parents as soon as it is safe to do so concerning welfare of the children.
- If at all possible, during most emergency situations staff and children will remain on site or at another site in the neighborhood (school, fire station, library, etc.). Parents will be kept abreast of any crisis or emergency situations, if they arise.

Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteers are utilized for special events and daily operations. Opportunities are available to those ages 18 and older. If you have a special skill you would like to share, you may be a perfect match for our program. Days and times will vary. All volunteers must complete a volunteer application. Background checks will be completed on all volunteers. For more information, call (434) 432-7736.

How Parents Can Be Helpful

The After School program is not a daycare or a baby-sitting service. Please remind your child that this program is designed to meet their needs and interests, and cooperation is key for safety and enjoyment. Parents are encouraged to inform staff of any special needs or changes at home to better support their child. Feedback is important, so please share your thoughts. We will keep up-to-date records of attendance and emergency information, so notify us of any changes in contact info, health, or medication.

Clothing and Personal Belongings

- Please label all of your child's belongings.
- Please do not send personal items to the program such as toys, money, stuffed animals, games, etc. We are not responsible for any misplaced, damaged, or stolen items.
- Cell phones and electronics are NOT allowed in the After School program unless there is a special event in which we notify parents in advance.

Behavior Management and Supervision Policies and Procedures

- Children, parents, and staff are to address each other respectfully and cordially at all times.
- Children must conduct themselves in a manner that does not endanger their safety or the safety of others.
- Your child is expected to follow instructions and maintain individual space. Your child is expected to keep their hands, feet, and other objects to themselves.
- Your child must agree to be independent in activities of daily living (eating, toileting, etc.), manage their own behavior with minimal staff intervention, make simple choices, and have the desire to participate.

Expectations of Participant

Rules and consequences will be reviewed regularly. Participants are expected to:

- Exercise respect toward all people, places of business, equipment, and vehicles.
- Follow the rules associated with activities and program areas and ask a staff member for clarification if needed.
- Communicate and conduct themselves in an appropriate manner. Threatening words, tone of voice, gestures, foul language, sexually inappropriate behavior, teasing, bullying, throwing objects, and physical contact will not be tolerated and are prohibited.

Expectations of Staff

In order to promote your child's physical, intellectual, emotional, social well-being, and growth, staff will provide needed help, comfort, support and:

- Respect personal privacy, differences in cultural, ethnic, and family backgrounds
- Encourage decision-making abilities
- Promote ways of getting along
- Encourage independence and self-direction
- Use consistency in applying expectations

Program staff will use a positive approach to behavior management. Disciplinary actions that will not be used are:

- Any form of physical punishment such as spanking, hitting, or shaking.
- Use of exercise.
- Punishing a participant for toileting accidents.
- Forcing participants to write repetitive sentences as a consequence.
- Forcing or withholding quiet time, snack, water, or bathroom privileges.
- Giving authority/consent to allow a participant or other person(s) to punish another participant.
- Enforcing a punishment at the request of a parent/guardian that resulted from behavior at home.

Expectations of Parents/Guardians

To ensure the safety and well-being of all program participants, parents/guardians, visitors and staff members are expected to demonstrate respect towards all program participants, other parents/guardians, visitors and staff members.

Parents/guardians are financially responsible for their own and/or child's actions when they:

- Defacing and/or destroying the building, grounds, or equipment.
- Tampering with or pulling the fire alarm without due cause.
- Attempting or committing assault and/or battery of a participant or staff.

Parents/guardians and visitors are also expected to treat the staff, facility and property appropriately and with care. Use of threats, sexual or offensive gestures, sexually inappropriate behavior, throwing of objects, disrespectful behavior, and physical assault are prohibited and may result in the parent, guardian, visitor or person being asked to leave the program site and be prohibited from coming to a program site in the future thereby making the individual unable to pick up participants from the program site.

Progressive Discipline

Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation program participants are encouraged to play, learn, and grow in a supportive and inclusive environment. As such, certain behaviors are discouraged and may result in appropriate disciplinary responses (examples of this behavior include: difficulty following program rules and policies, difficulty participating in group experiences or cooperating with others, threats to the safety of themselves or others, etc. for a complete listing of inappropriate behavior, see next page). Depending on the behavior, Parks and Recreation staff reserve the right to issue the appropriate progressive step indicated below.

Disciplinary actions will be progressive, and include:

Step One: Verbal Warning

Parks and Recreation staff will remind participants of our program behavior expectations and verbally redirect participants who engage in minor inappropriate behaviors. This will include, but not limited to reiterating that participants are to maintain individual space and keep their hands, feet, etc. to themselves.

Step Two: Intervention

Staff members may use one or more of the following interventions:

- Participants may be redirected to a staff designated program area for an appropriate time period.
- Referral to the optional “Stress Free Zone”: to assist with behavior management. A Stress-Free Zone is a supervised quiet time/place, separated from an activity where staff may recommend or the participant self-refers when having difficulty managing emotions or displaying inappropriate behavior. It is carried out quietly and privately and should not be viewed as punitive, threatening or humiliating. This is used to allow the participant time to calm down and then talk with the program staff about their feelings and needs. Other choices for stress relief may be given (ex. Drawing, writing, exercise, quiet area, etc.)

Use of positive feedback and rewards are encouraged.

- Required Time Out, to allow the participant time to regroup, discuss inappropriate behavior and alternative choices, and prepare to continue recreational programming and fun. Participants will be monitored and reevaluated at five-minute intervals to determine their readiness to rejoin the group.
- Staff may, in this step, contact the parents; however, we want to avoid external motivation from daily operations. The reason for this is if a participant understands that their parents will have to be called to correct behavior, then they may not be able to correct their behavior on their own.

Step 3: Early Pick-Up

Will be required in situations where the participant is unable to manage their behavior despite verbal warning and intervention attempts; the misconduct is egregious; and/or participant requires attention beyond the capacity of our staff to provide. At this step, Behavior Support Tools will be introduced.

Step 4: Suspension

Participants will automatically be suspended for two days if they are involved in a physical altercation or continued behavior issues. If a second altercation occurs, participants will be expelled from the program.

Bullying

Bullying – defined as unwanted aggressive or non-aggressive behavior, that involves the real, or perceived to be real, power or control of one participant(s) directed towards other participant(s) – will not be tolerated.

- These actions include, but are not limited to threats, spreading rumors, verbal and or physical attacks and the intentional exclusion of individual(s) from a group activity. Participants who display these types of behaviors will be considered for disciplinary action in accordance with our philosophy of progressive discipline.
- Any behavior that is deemed aggressive or threatening will require immediate removal from the program/facility with the possibility of further consequences.
- If the patron is a minor, staff will make every effort to contact the parent or guardian to make them aware of the situation.
- Any unlawful behavior or activity will be reported to the appropriate legal authorities for further action.
- Any inappropriate behavior can result in disciplinary action ranging from a warning, temporary suspension, and/or expulsion from the program.

Suspension/Removal of Children from the Program

- **Your child can be temporarily suspended or permanently expelled from the program with less than a 24-hour notice.**
- If they are temporarily suspended, parent/guardian is required to meet with the program coordinator prior to reinstatement in the program. If they are reinstated and a behavioral problem continues, they will be immediately removed from the program on a permanent basis.
- **Please note that no credits or refunds will be given for days of suspension.** Children may be removed from the program for failure to submit required forms, continued misbehavior after a suspension, or non-payment of fees required. **Parents wishing to remove their child from the program must speak directly with the Program Coordinator.**

Behavior Support Tools

Parent Conference

- Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation staff may require a meeting with the parent(s)/guardians after two or more interventions are utilized.
- In the case of persistent problems, parent/guardians will be notified, and a conference will be held with the program coordinator and/or Division Director.
- If a meeting is required, participants will be unable to attend our program until after the meeting has taken place. This does not prohibit parents and staff from having other general discussions, meetings, or conferences about a participant in the program.

Behavioral Contract

Depending upon the circumstances, one of the tools that may be utilized, at the discretion of a staff member, is a behavioral contract. A behavioral contract is a written guide to assist participants with behavior management that can be modified to the needs of the participant. This is generally used in conjunction with a parent conference, but may be implemented earlier, if determined to be a useful tool to bring about improvement in behavior.

The following is not permitted and will not be tolerated:

- Personal items, cell phones, iPod, and toys brought from home, unless approved by authorized staff for an event. Pittsylvania County and/or the program staff are not responsible for stolen, damaged, or lost items.
- Horseplay, fighting, or rough/inappropriate behavior of any kind.
- Use of profanity, obscene gestures or other inappropriate language.
- Undue familiarity, such as inappropriate touching, indecent exposure, immoral conduct or sexual assault.
- Throwing or flicking rocks, supplies, or game pieces.
- Hitting, kicking, slapping, or punching another participant or staff.
- Hazing, threatening, bullying, or intimidating behavior or language toward another person.
- Betting or gambling.
- Smoking; state law requires staff to report to the proper authorities any participant(s) caught with cigarettes.
- Possession or use of alcoholic beverages and illegal drugs.
- Arson, attempted arson, or tampering with electrical equipment or fire alarms.
- Stealing items from the equipment/storage room or another participant's backpack (personal belongings).
- Possession or use of dangerous toys or weapons (see weapons policy).

Weapons

- Participants are prohibited from possessing, using, or handling weapons or dangerous instruments on County/School property. Dangerous weapons include firearms, knives, or any object intended to inflict harm or cause fear. Possession or use of a firearm or replica violates this policy and will be reported to the police, resulting in immediate suspension or expulsion from the program.

Tax-Related Childcare Spending Requests

We provide childcare spending reports for tax purposes, but they are not automatically sent to you. To receive one, please submit a request. You may request one by email or by calling (434) 432-7736 with the following information:

- Parent/Guardian name and email address
- Children's names and program enrolled
- Primary and/or secondary phone numbers

This information will be provided to you once we have received and verified you are a person able to receive this information. Pittsylvania County's Tax ID/EIN is:

Compliance with Standards

Compliance with the standards set by Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation will enhance the safety and enjoyment of every participant. Failure to comply with the information outlined in this handbook or the falsification of the program requirements will result in loss of program privileges. Pittsylvania County Parks and Recreation reserves the right:

- To call the parent and request that the child be picked up within one hour of being notified.
- To suspend your child for one, or more days for their failure to adhere to the established behavior guidelines, participant expectations and the policies procedures outlined in the handbook. Fees will not be pro-rated or refunded for time missed due to a suspension.
- Reported violations or severe behavior may result in a long-term suspension or expulsion from the program.

Licensing Information

- Licensed Programs are regulated by the State of Virginia Department of Education Licensing Division's Child Day Center Standards. Programs that are exempt from licensure operate under 22.1-289.030 B.6 of The Code of Virginia which allows local governments to establish safety and supervisory standards.

Homework/Reading Time

- During the school year, we have scheduled homework time each afternoon. Staff will assist each participant with their homework, and we will strive to complete everything each day, however, parents and guardians should still check homework each day at home. If all homework is not completed, staff will let families know during pick up. Education is a valued part of our program, and our intention is for children to learn through play and learn fundamental skills through character building, health and wellness lessons, and find their own voice.

We look forward to having your child in our After School Program!

Please contact Kelsie Myers for more information.

Kelsie.myers@pittgov.org

(434) 432-7736